

**Following the Roadmap:
Next Steps in Implementing Outcome-Based Environmental Management**

**Recommendations of the Environmental Advisory Council
December 16, 2010**

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BACKGROUND

In December 2008, then Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Director Steven Chester asked the DEQ's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) to consider Michigan's current approach to addressing environmental issues and the need for a new direction. In December 2009, the EAC submitted to Director Steven Chester a document entitled "The Roadmap to a New Environmental Management Model for Michigan" ("Roadmap") in response to that request.

The Roadmap provides a broad framework for positively changing environmental and natural resource policy. The need for the framework is based on, among other things, the proposition that multiple factors (e.g., economic conditions that limit funding available to government) are reshaping the services government can deliver, as well as how they should be delivered. In response, recommendations in the Roadmap call for focusing efforts on desired outcomes agreed upon among affected interests while devoting government and private resources towards clear priorities. As a result of converging environmental, economic, and social issues, now is a time of great opportunity and need for innovation—innovation in redesigning environmental governance and facilitating the protection and use of Michigan's environment.

One core principle of this redesign is the use of agreed upon "outcomes" to serve as the driving force for actions at several levels. Program outcomes—environmental and resource conditions, economic activity, and social impacts—are a function of inputs, activities, and outputs. By gaining widespread agreement on a set of desired outcomes, we facilitate achieving agreement on the outputs that are necessary to accomplish the outcomes, the activities that are necessary to deliver the outputs, and the resources that are necessary to conduct the activities.

A second core principle is the need to expand collaboration and partnerships to both create, achieve, and maintain the desired outcomes. This approach harnesses the individual talents and strengths of partners, fosters synergy, lowers animosity, and can lead to creative solutions that meet the interests of broad constituencies. The Roadmap recognizes that the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE)¹ will need to "appropriately relinquish some traditional roles and decision making authority to foster effective collaborations and partnerships."

2010 REQUEST TO THE EAC

In furtherance of incorporating the Roadmap and its principles into the operations of the DNRE, in February 2010, DNRE Director Rebecca Humphries asked the EAC to:

1. Review the DNRE's current use of outcome-based performance measures
2. Recommend the priority areas for the development of outcomes
3. Recommend a process for developing those outcomes

¹ As this document was nearing completion, Governor-elect Rick Snyder announced plans to reconstitute the Department of Natural Resources and Environment into separate agencies. It can be inferred that references throughout this document to DNRE can be interchanged with the appropriate to-be-separated departments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations respond to Director Humphries' request.

A. Current DNRE use of outcome-based performance measures

During the summer of 2010, a catalog of outcome measures currently used within the DNRE was developed based on division chief interviews and review of case studies. This catalog can be found at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnre/dnre-eac-9-16-10-OutcomeMeasuresCatalog_335726_7.pdf. This research found that division programs typically fit into three broad categories:

- Actively engaging outcome measures with well-defined goals, though outcomes are typically narrow and pertain to specific media (e.g., air, water).
- Essentially oriented toward outcomes, though outcomes are not explicit and/or do not have well-defined goals attached.
- Largely not oriented toward outcomes.

The research also described the perceptions and attitude of departmental program managers to the use of the outcomes-based approach. On the one hand, program managers saw the benefits of this approach including:

- Having indices for end goals may help to guide decisions with limited resources.
- Tying staff activities to actual environmental, economic, or cultural outcomes is good for staff morale by providing a sense of working toward something and a connection with overarching department goals.
- An outcome-based model can create optimism focused on the pursuit of goals rather than pessimism focused on constraints.
- Using outcomes increases the ability to identify gaps in monitoring, programs, activities, or efforts that are no longer necessary.
- Structuring a department-wide problem-solving process around outcomes enhances communication and program integration.

On the other hand, program managers expressed some concerns and doubts:

- While use of outcome measures makes sense conceptually, they can be too theoretical and disconnected with on-the-ground program activities, particularly given resource and statutory constraints.

- Where divisions feel that programs are already effective and efficient, implementing outcome measures feels like an unnecessary exercise with little overall benefit.
- Achieving outcomes may require statutory amendments, which can be difficult to achieve.
- It is difficult to develop outcomes in the context of programs that are designed to prevent harm from occurring.
- Measuring for outcomes can be difficult, time-consuming, and costly. As a result it might divert resources from direct program activities.
- Particularly in reactive or tightly constrained divisions, or in programs where setting outcome goals would entail marginal gains over current conditions, (e.g. achieving *100 percent* swimmable beaches), outcome measures may be discouraging or even threatening to staff.
- It might be difficult to obtain funding for activities in pursuit of marginal gains in natural resource, environmental or public health conditions.

The EAC acknowledges these real opportunities and constraints. The recommendations we provide below respond to them as well as refine the direction provided in the Roadmap.

B. Initial recommended priority areas for the development of outcomes

The key issue in selection of program areas for the development of outcomes is that of scale. On one end of the spectrum, outcomes could developed at the scale of environmental and natural resources policy generally, beyond (but including) the existing scope of current DNRE programs. On the other end, outcomes could be developed at the scale of a specific site or location.

The EAC recommends that this effort lay between these two extremes and focus at the program scale. A programmatic scale offers the potential for both direct program and policy benefits as well as an opportunity for gaining proficiency in the use and development of outcomes in a more targeted fashion.

Furthermore, the program level provides a meaningful and concrete context for program managers and other participants without impeding opportunities to look beyond the work of individual divisions for fostering integration across existing organizational boundaries.

The EAC recommends a diverse array of priority program areas that are generally representative of the DNRE's scope, address a variety of environmental media, and cut across traditional departmental lines. Additionally, the programs have strong associations to economic and social factors, provide a mix of use-based and non-use-based areas, and range from fairly narrow in scope and well bounded to complex and broad. Finally, because policies in these areas are under discussion for a variety of reasons, it is timely to develop agreed upon outcomes to guide these policy discussions. We believe this will focus additional attention and effort in these program areas around the short- and long-term desired social, economic and environmental goals of these programs.

The following list of program areas is not exclusive or exhaustive of all the possible choices. That is, interested parties (including the DNRE), could ultimately choose to move forward with only some of the items identified and/or choose to add additional program areas for the development of outcomes.

We recommend that outcomes be developed in the following priority program areas.

Biodiversity Conservation Planning

The Biological Diversity Conservation Act makes conservation of biodiversity an important part of the DNRE's mission. Michigan's biological heritage includes 1,800 native plant species and 16,000 native animal species. In 2005, the DNRE adopted a Biodiversity Conservation Planning Process designed to conserve biological diversity on all DNR administered lands and to cooperate with other landowners, to conserve, restore and protect the biological diversity of Michigan. The resulting program, called Living Legacies, would protect Michigan's biological heritage through a network of biological stewardship areas (BSAs). In 2009, design teams, comprised of staff from the DNRE, representative from Michigan tribes, and a diverse range of stakeholder organizations began to systematically assess and recommend potential BSAs in the northern Lower and Upper Peninsula. A similar effort began for the southern Lower Peninsula in 2010. In 2011, DNRE staff will develop additional information and offer a series of stakeholder and general public meetings to support public review of proposed BSAs. Based on the resulting comments, staff will propose BSAs to the Director for formal designation. DNRE staff will then develop site-specific management objectives and actions for DNRE managed portions of BSAs and encourage other landowners to voluntarily implement actions that will help conserve biodiversity within BSAs. Designated BSAs will be monitored, and then reviewed and re-assessed on a 10-year cycle linked with Ecoregional Plans. **The DNRE should continue to administer the Living Legacies program, which is designed to achieve a set of agreed upon outcomes called "desired future conditions", as an outcome based program.**

Implementation of the Wildlife Division Strategic Plan

The Wildlife's Division's mission is to enhance, restore and conserve the state's wildlife resources, natural communities, and ecosystems. Recognizing the continued decline in budgets and staffing, the Wildlife Division is striving to become a more efficient, focused, and adaptive agency. To meet these challenges, in October 2009, the Wildlife Division began the process of updating the Division's strategic plan to outline measurable goals, objectives, desired outcomes, and major priorities for future efforts. The plan will complement other DNRE planning efforts. Forty-one focus group meetings were conducted and over 60 individual constituents were

interviewed to identify important issues that impact Michigan's wildlife resources. Additional staff meetings and feedback meetings with stakeholders were held to develop strategic goals and objectives to provide the directions the Division will take to conserve and manage Michigan's wildlife. After the opportunity for public comment, the Plan was adopted in November 2010. The concepts of collaboration and agreed-upon outcomes are embedded in the Plan. It recognizes, for example, that securing the future of Michigan's wildlife requires focusing management on regional issues where "decisions are supported by scientific facts and principles and reflect the needs of species, desires of partners and concerns of stakeholders." **The DNRE should emphasize collaboration and the development of outcomes as it implements the Plan.**

Wet Weather Related Programs

Many of the challenging water impairments in urban watersheds are related to wet weather events. The regulatory framework for managing wet weather is defined by specific regulatory programs: storm water, combined sewer overflows, and sanitary sewer overflows that are largely managed on independent tracks. Yet the costs and water quality benefits of programs within and between these tracks vary enormously. **In order to create a common basis to evaluate alternatives and tradeoffs and facilitate coordinated efforts, interested parties should develop a statement of unifying outcomes for managing wet weather issues that cuts across individual program areas.**

Funding for Wastewater and Sewer Infrastructure

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) provides financial assistance to municipalities to assure wastewater facilities are in compliance with discharge/water quality requirements of the federal Clean Water Act and Part 31 of NREPA. The SRF provides low-interest loans to municipalities for the construction of publicly owned wastewater treatment works and infrastructure improvements. Since 1989, the SRF has provided 407 loans totaling over \$3.4 billion. In 2008, Michigan municipalities estimated their projected costs to maintain and upgrade their wastewater treatment infrastructure over the next 20 years to be \$3.7 billion. Without adequate investment in sewer and wastewater infrastructure, these facilities are at great risk of deterioration threatening both public health and Michigan's water resources. The SRF has been managed to provide assistance for necessary wastewater treatment projects well into the future. The amount of funding made available each year has been limited in order to provide a sustainable source of funding to meet long term projected needs. Recent discussions with stakeholders have caused this fundamental management objective to be revisited. The DNRE is assembling a Revolving Fund Advisory Committee to evaluate the existing process and recommend ways to achieve a number of specific outcomes. The creation and charge of this committee are embodied in recently enacted legislation. **The Committee should agree upon program outcomes and develop recommendations for achieving those outcomes.**

Environmental Remediation (Part 201)

Michigan's Environmental Remediation Program (Part 201) regulates most sites of environmental contamination in Michigan. Regulation impacts many segments of Michigan's environment and economy including land use, surface water, groundwater, soil, fishery health, business investment, banking, development, and real estate transfers. The current statutory framework for Part 201 was established in 1995. The most fundamental change to the program

at that time was a shift from a strict liability standard to a causation-based liability standard which, because of difficulties imposing liability under this standard, essentially shifted the impetus to voluntary cleanups. The change in the liability system also meant that a significant proportion of contaminated sites would have to be cleaned up at public expense because it would not be possible to identify a viable, liable party that had caused the contamination. Revenue for publicly-funded cleanups is largely at an end. A 2007 assessment of the program undertaken by Public Sector Consultants for the DNRE highlighted that while progress had been made since 1995, there are significant impediments to fostering cleanups. Legislation enacted in 2010 is designed to more effectively encourage voluntary cleanups and provide bridge funding until long-term funding can be developed. But there is a significant discrepancy between the outcome implicit in the law of cleaning up all sites to acceptable levels of risk and the tools and resources given the department to meet that outcome. **Interested parties must resolve this discrepancy by reaching an agreement on the cleanup program outcomes they are willing to accept and provide for in terms of public policy and resources.** This agreement needs to occur within the term of the bridge funding, which is approximately the next three to four years.

Wetlands

Part 303, Wetlands Protection, defines regulated wetlands and their importance to Michigan's citizens and provides a process for authorization of construction activities in wetlands under both state and federal law where such impacts are unavoidable. The program as administered by the DNRE also provides assistance to landowners in identification of wetlands, promotes wetland restoration, provides for monitoring and assessment of wetland resources, and encourages public support through education and stewardship. The state has established the goal of restoring 500,000 acres of wetland by 2079 through partnerships with other state, federal, and private agencies. Due to budgetary constraints in 2009, the state considered elimination of the Michigan wetland program, returning regulation of activities in wetlands to federal agencies under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Instead, the Legislature passed Public Act 120 of 2009, which amended the wetland (and related) law and provides program funding for three years while a statutory-created Wetland Advisory Council evaluates the program and make recommendations for improvement. In developing its report, due August 15, 2012, **the Council is encouraged to consider agreed-upon outcomes for Michigan's wetlands program and the policies and resources necessary to achieve those outcomes.**

Critical Dunes Program

The DNRE regulates activities that significantly alter the physical characteristics of dunes in the 70,000 acres of designated critical dune areas. The governing statute, which dates to 1989, contains difficult decision-making criteria and provides little guidance as to how the DNRE is to apply those criteria. The DNRE has implemented several program improvements recommended by a work group of affected interests convened in 2008. But the underlying program implementation issues have not been resolved. The improving economy will soon increase development pressure in the high-value dune areas with resulting pressure for program reform. These program reforms are likely not possible without agreement on the fundamental purposes of regulating development in critical dunes. Further, the role of regulation should be designed with reference to the full range of private and public sector activities encouraging appropriate dune management. **Interested parties should agree to the outcomes for critical**

dune protection and development in order to determine the nature of, and role of government in, appropriate dune management.

Recreation

Public land in Michigan provides for tremendous recreational opportunities, substantial economic impacts, and significant ecological benefits. Diminishing budgets however have strained public land managers' abilities to provide service and meet recreational demands and maintaining infrastructure and facilities has been adversely affected. Since 2003, the Michigan State Park system had received no general funds and has relied on entrance fee, camping revenue and the State Park Endowment fund for operational funding and capital improvement. Likewise, funding of state forest campgrounds and recreational trails has been significantly cut, forcing several campgrounds to be closed and preventing the DNRE from grooming many miles of trails. The recently enacted Recreation Passport creates the potential of a broad-based funding model for State Parks and will assist with funding of state forest recreation and local facility needs. And the Natural Resources Trust Fund will shortly reach its cap, likely resulting in a reduction in available funding for support of state and local public land acquisition and development.

Interested parties should seize this opportunity to consider the role of public land recreation in Michigan's future, the outcomes that would define success, and the investment in public land recreation necessary to achieve those outcomes.

Non-Native Invasive Species

Non-native invasive plant, animal, or microbial species are having dramatic economic and environmental impacts on native plant and animal communities as well as human health. Generally speaking, most of the coordination, control and management of non-native invasive species has reacted to rather than prevented introductions, and has been limited by media specific activities dictated by available funding sources. The number of existing non-native invasive species that are already well established and spreading rapidly throughout Michigan and the certainty of new introductions require strategically focused efforts. This strategic focus could be provided by a statement of the desired outcomes for invasive species management that illustrates why the management of invasive species is environmentally and economically important.

Interested parties should develop a statement of desired outcomes that encourages consistent action by involved agencies, determines the scale of treatment and prevention techniques, and focuses efforts at prioritized sites.

Cumulative Impacts

The combination of environment impacts resulting from numerous human activities is generally referred to as "cumulative impacts." While individually these activities may have small impacts and meet legal standards, impacts can accumulate from multiple sources and can, in the aggregate, result in degradation of quality of life and health issues for human communities. By and large, cumulative impacts occur through either compounding effects as a result of the coming together of two or more effects, or through persistent additions or losses of the same materials or resource. The environmental and health consequences of these circumstances are difficult to evaluate because of the difficulty in understanding the complexities of impacts and a lack of available information analyzing and assessing those impacts. Further, although individuals and communities are impacted by the combined effects of multiple and diffuse sources of contaminants, the regulatory structure is largely designed to address specific, readily

discernible sources of contaminants. Agreed upon outcomes, in the form of a description of acceptable cumulative environmental and health conditions—as distinguished from acceptable levels of individual discharges or residual risk—would help align departmental and stakeholder resources towards managing cumulative impacts and address environmental justice concerns. Some such work has been for individual pollutants in the form of ambient air standards and Total Daily Maximum Loads for water quality. **Interested parties should undertake comprehensive efforts to develop agreed upon outcomes addressing multiple stressors in highly affected communities.**

C. Development of and Connection to a Broader Vision

While we recognize the practicality of focusing current efforts on immediately relevant, program level outcomes, we also do not want to lose sight of the broader, longer term vision. The Roadmap envisioned the development of agreed upon outcomes on broad topics such as public health, economic conditions, environmental quality, sustainable communities, and ecological functioning and integrity. Agreed upon outcome statements for these topics would cut across individual program areas highlighting the need for broader legal authorities and funding mechanisms. In addition, such outcomes would extend beyond DNRE programs, requiring more significant roles for other private and public organizations and highlighting the importance of partnerships and collaboration.

We consider the program area focus we recommend as a step toward this broader vision. As a pragmatic extension of the DNRE's current outcome management activities, it is realistically achievable step. As a template for action and opportunity for learning, it is a step of considerable distance. **As work on program level outcomes proceeds, the EAC recommends efforts to develop a broader vision to guide the further development of agreed upon outcomes.**

D. Recommended Process to Develop Outcomes

Intentionally, there are similarities and differences among the recommended priority program areas. The programs are similar to one another, for example, in that outcomes for each must be developed through the involvement of stakeholders inside and outside the DNRE and the policy that evolves will be subject to outside influences and circumstances. However, they are different for example, in that they are each at a different point in the policy discussion and they involve different constituencies with different levels of, among other things, technical understanding, political sophistication, and interest in broad policy versus discrete, concrete decisions.

As a result, the EAC recognizes the need to recommend a process to develop outcomes that meets certain common needs, but is also flexible to address the uniqueness of individual circumstances as well as conditions that are rapidly changing in Michigan. We can best meet those competing demands by recommending a framework for developing outcomes instead of imposing a prescriptive set of procedural steps.

First, we recommend that all efforts to develop outcomes share certain common characteristics:

- Be broadly inclusive and diverse
- Be transparent
- Recognize the value different stakeholders place on alternative outcomes
- Address differing levels of environmental literacy and understanding
- Appropriately engage technical expertise
- Generate trust in process and among participants
- Focus on value and benefit
- Recognize the significance of outcomes previously established by the legal framework of federal and state law
- Be capable of involving both regional and state level discussions within the scope of the effort

Second, we recommend that parties outside the DNRE be encouraged to take a lead role in the development of outcomes.

The DNRE has traditionally driven planning efforts (such as the development of outcomes) for a variety of reasons. First, natural resource and environmental planning is generally perceived as a governmental function. Second, it is difficult for non-governmental agencies, businesses, or associations to be viewed as neutral or able to afford the time and energy necessary to coordinate planning efforts. But just as the Roadmap recognizes that the DNRE must change some aspects of its traditional roles, other organizations should be encouraged to assume new roles. Therefore, the DNRE should encourage diverse outside organizations, representing a mix of interests, to spearhead the development of outcomes in priority program areas of interest provided the approach is otherwise consistent with the framework we describe.

One way to encourage a leadership role in the development of outcomes is for the DNRE to initiate the conversation by convening interested parties and perhaps prepare some of the supporting background material and analysis (as discussed below) but then gradually diminish its role to that of a participant.

The DNRE could also encourage leadership by others by simply contributing logistical and administrative support to the effort.

Whichever way it occurs, the key to structuring a broad conversation about outcomes is for it have sufficient legitimacy and traction for interested parties to be willing to invest in participation.

Third, we recommend a common analytical approach in preparation for developing outcomes.

The process leading to agreed upon outcomes will vary to some extent with who takes the lead in convening the parties involved. But we recommend that a common analytical approach be used no matter who convenes the discussion in a given program area. That analysis should

describe how agreed upon outcomes will be developed and fit into the evolution of the specific program under discussion. At a minimum, the analysis should include:

1. What the outcomes will specify, addressing the question of how the participants will know that they've agreed upon a statement of outcomes as called for in the Roadmap.
2. The constituencies that will be involved in developing the outcome, what their role will be, and when in the process they will be involved. In some situations the primary role of the DNRE may only be for administrative management.
3. How that outcome and developing it will fit into the current program direction. Among other things, how will agreed upon outcomes facilitate better resource-related decisions?
4. How current legal constraints and authorization will apply to the outcome. This will require a scoping statement of sorts for the effort. Specifically, do (or can) outcomes need to be developed within the current legal framework or could the process include the potential for a statement of outcomes that will require a revised legal framework?
5. A timeframe for development of the outcome(s).

The convener's perspective on these topics is a starting point for discussions with collaborators. Things may change as a result of collaborative discussions with interested parties.

Fourth, we recommend that the effort to develop outcomes in individual programs be considered in the broader context of environmental and natural resources outcomes.

We recommend current efforts to develop outcomes should be focused in specific program areas. But as discussed previously, we also recognize the need to eventually develop a set of cross-cutting and holistic agreed-upon outcomes that will guide both the management of the DNRE and activities of other organizations and individuals. Therefore, near term efforts should be considered an opportunity for learning that can be applied both in the context of other specific program areas in the future and in the shaping of broader more holistic outcome discussions. To assist in that regard, we recommend:

1. The convener of an outcome discussion should monitor and evaluate its process as it is implemented.
 - a. A team representing multiple interests should oversee the development and acceptance of the above analysis for the program area.
 - b. Part of the team's role should be to evaluate areas where proposed legislation and rule making could be applicable.
 - c. Part of the team's role should be to develop the monitoring and evaluation questions about the process itself that will be considered as the process unfolds.

- d. The process is subject to revision as it goes forward.
 - e. Periodic and/or a final report(s) should be prepared that evaluates the process for the program area and describes lessons learned.
 - f. Periodic post reviews and an associated reference system should be instituted to have a process that is permanent yet flexible in order to adapt through changes in administration and departmental leadership.
2. The process should be transparent. Documents developed in this process should be available to participants and the general public.

E. Recommended Content of Outcome Statements

This set of recommendations recognizes that the process of developing outcomes cannot be highly engineered. Partially, this situation is because of differences between programs, but more importantly, it is because the opportunity for parties outside the DNRE to drive collaborative discussions will result in differences in how those discussions occur.

Rather, the process of developing outcomes must be viewed as organic, subject to growth over time as the result of how it arises, how it is structured, the participants, and the nature of the discussion and its perceived urgency.

It is important, however, that these discussions be meaningful and attempt to achieve some measure of consistency between the different efforts. To provide the environmental, social, and economic benefits envisioned, a successful, broadly agreed upon outcome statement must address the tough questions. Therefore, **we recommend that a collaboratively agreed upon outcome statement address:**

- The metric(s) used to measure the outcome(s)
- The standard that will be considered success in achieving or pursuing the outcome
- Policy, program, and legal changes that are considered necessary to achieve the outcome
- The parties who need to contribute to achieving the outcome and their role
- The interrelationships between achieving the outcome and other policy interests
- The tradeoffs that may be necessary to achieve the outcome
- A projected timeline for achieving the outcome

F. Recommended Nature of Agreement on Outcomes

We recommend that each group reach an understanding of what constitutes agreement on outcomes.

We believe the process of identifying outcomes should drive towards as broad a consensus or agreement as possible recognizing though that unanimity among competing or disparate interests can be difficult. The process should strive to address points of similarity in the vision but it also

must accommodate difficult differences. This is the hard work of a group of collaborators and will take patience, leadership, and humility. It is even harder still when individuals with widely different points of view or with different experiences and perspectives grapple with these issues. To that end, we firmly believe that such a legitimate process must include broad diversity of thought and opinion and not shy away from this. However, participants will need to live with some ambiguity and not everyone will get everything they hope for.

We recommend that the groups consider consensus to be reached when all members will support both the process and the result. This can serve to move a group well along in decision making but can also deal well with individuals who may want to hold out or try to block reaching a conclusion. All groups and efforts will have to determine how they will come to a decision in the end--a key first step in organizing such discussions—but we hope for some measure of consistency in reaching agreement, consensus, or unanimity.

We also recognize that despite the best effort of participants and lengthy attempts, consensus agreement on outcomes may not always be possible. Even so, much can be gained from the work done. In some cases, groups may be able to agree on some aspect of an outcome—the metric to be used for example—but not others—such as the standard that would be considered success in achieving the outcome. In other cases, a group may not be able to agree on specific outcomes, but may be able to agree on a set of principles. Finally, a group may achieve agreement on neither outcomes nor principles, but will still be able to articulate the alternatives considered and the nature of their discussion. Each of these results will provide benefits by informing future decisions, though not nearly to the extent as fully agreed upon outcomes. When the success of a discussion about outcomes is in question, those leading the discussion must gauge the relative benefit of these various results against the potential and cost of achieving them through continued effort.

CONCLUSION

This effort has been designed to advance the transition to a new environmental and natural resource governance model initiated by the Roadmap to a New Environmental Management Model for Michigan.

In January 2010, the DNRE requested the EAC to provide recommendations for implementing the Roadmap in the near term. What we offer in response is not a prescription, but a conceptual framework. This framework builds upon two fundamental principles in the Roadmap: the use of agreed-upon outcomes as the basis for management, and the expansion of collaborative models for decision-making and implementation.

This framework recognizes the pressing needs of DNRE program managers in implementing the Roadmap. It suggests how to pursue favorable opportunities while addressing pragmatic concerns about this approach. Most notably, this thought process focuses on developing outcomes with real world, current application in significant program areas important to the future of Michigan. But it is directly tied to the development of a broader environmental, conservation, and economic vision for Michigan.

Finally, this framework recognizes how involved and difficult it will be to truly develop and ultimately broadly agree on outcome statements as envisioned in the Roadmap. An outcome statement is not simply a vision of the future; it is a goal in which trade-offs and values are embedded.

If we can truly agree upon such statements, we will have traveled a long road toward the Michigan we all wish and hope for.